

THE ALASKA FOOD COALITION



**Results from the 2006 Alaska BRFSS Survey Concerning the
Hunger Issue**

Henryk Szadziewski

Alaska Food Coalition Program Manager

June 1, 2007

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Executive Summary

In recent studies, we have learned that 12% of Alaskans are food insecure and that one in eight Alaskans accesses the charitable food network at least once a year. What we did not know was that the food security situation in Rural Alaska, amongst children and with poor people is so alarming.

Results from the 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) survey allow a more granular analysis of the growing hunger problem in Alaska than has ever been previously available. The results provide the numbers to prove many of the suspicions long held about hunger in Alaska – that there is an unacceptable lack of protection for the most vulnerable people in our state.

Rural Alaska is suffering from a deplorable situation regarding food security. Rural Alaskans on almost every indicator in the BRFSS survey come out worse than urban Alaskans. The statewide figure of 12% food insecurity translates as 20% in Rural Alaska. Such conditions threaten the uniqueness and diversity of Alaska when many rural residents begin to believe that life in their villages is unsustainable because of a lack of food.

It is also difficult to believe that children are hungrier than adults in Alaska; however, this is the fact. The table below illustrates:

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Adults and Children)

	% of Adults	% of Children
Alaska	11 %	15 %
Anchorage	10 %	15 %
Gulf Coast	11 %	14 %
Southeast	7 %	9 %
Rural Alaska	20 %	24 %
Fairbanks	9 %	14 %

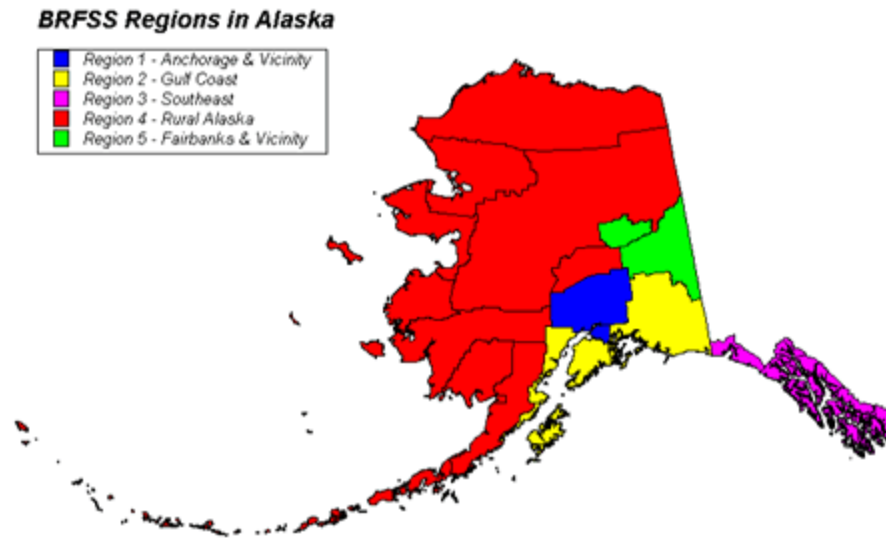
In a state with so many resources, more children than adults have to think about where their next meal is going to come from. This is a lamentable comment on our inadequate performance to protect the future of our state. The possibility of a future with opportunities for all Alaskans is being jeopardized by the large numbers of children from Anchorage to Rural Alaska who do not have enough to eat.

Low-income Alaskans living below the federal poverty level are also experiencing widespread difficulty in meeting their food needs. If you are poor in Alaska you have a one in three chance of being food insecure – if you live in Anchorage or Fairbanks it increases to one in two. Low-income Alaskans are also working Alaskans and like all working Alaskans are striving for a better life for themselves and their families. How is this possible when you are constantly worrying about a basic human need such as food?

The results from the BRFSS survey go beyond granular statistics on hunger in Alaska. They describe hidden people across the state; people in villages anxious over the increasing price of food in the local store, children too hungry to perform well in class and working men and women who skip meals so they can feed their families. The

BRFSS results also speak to us to act; to change the objectionable situation in our state and to make a difference. Finally, the BRFSS results compel Alaska's legislators, community leaders and opinion-makers to take notice of the growing number of hungry people and to support policies designed to transform Alaska into a food secure state.

Map of the BRFSS Regions in Alaska



Source: State of Alaska, Dept. of H&SS, Division of Public Health, CHBMS Unit

Note on Terminology

Until 2005, to determine levels of household food security, USDA used the labels: food secure, food insecurity without hunger and food insecurity with hunger. These labels were revised in 2006 to high food security, marginal food security, low food security and very low food security. The BRFSS survey for Alaska uses the older of these two sets of labels. The table below defines both new and old labels and outlines their relationship¹.

General categories (old and new labels are the same)	Detailed categories		
	Old label	New label	Description of conditions in the household
Food security	Food security	High food security	No reported indications of food-access problems or limitations
		Marginal food security	One or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake
Food insecurity	Food insecurity without hunger	Low food security	Reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake
	Food insecurity with hunger	Very low food security	Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake

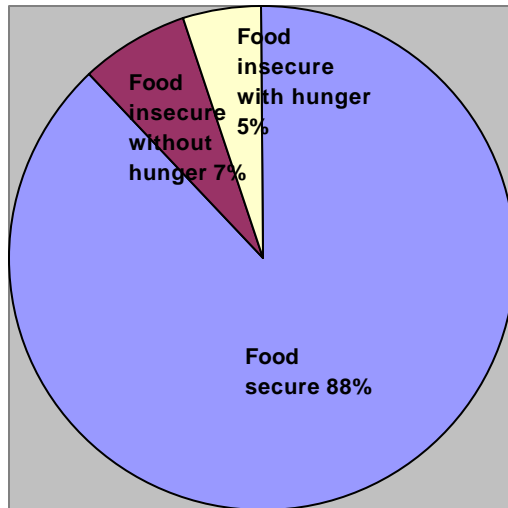
¹ More information is available from: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/labels.htm>

Notable Results

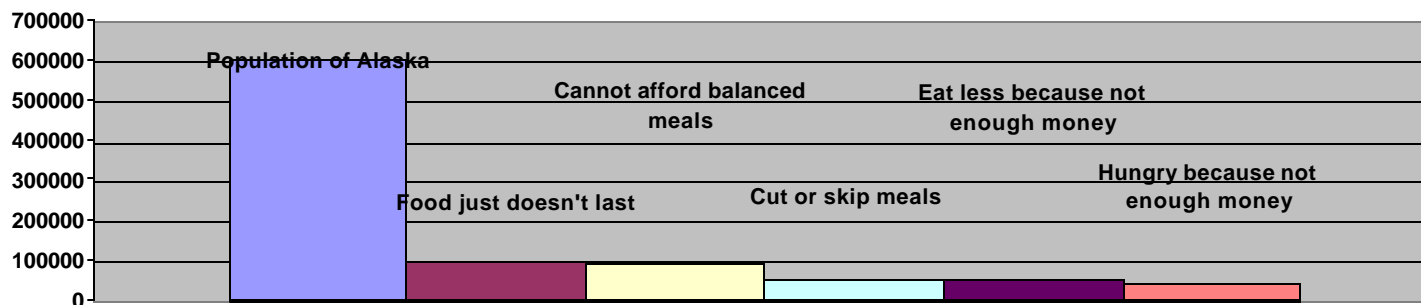
Overview

Statewide

Nearly 45,000 adults and nearly 27,000 children in Alaska are food insecure. Together they represent 12% of all Alaskans. Consistently, Alaskans report financial constraints on their ability to feed themselves adequately, regularly and nutritiously. 91,696 Alaskans find that the food they buy does not last and that there is no money to buy more – over 31,000 of this number are Alaskan children.

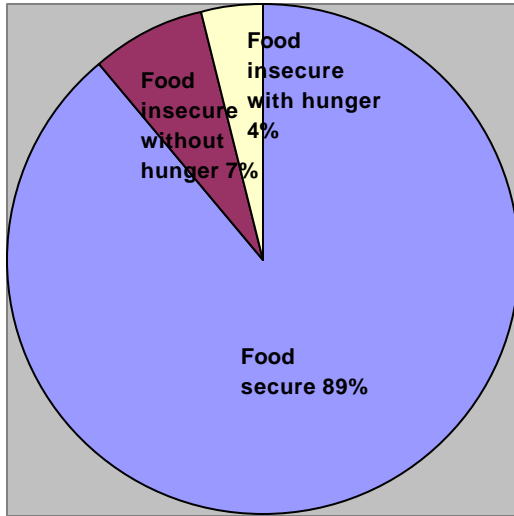


- 71,171 (12% of) Alaskans are food insecure. 29,607 (5% of all Alaskans and 42% of food insecure Alaskans) of them with hunger evident.
- 91,696 (14% of) Alaskans find that the food they buy just doesn't last and they don't have any money to get more.
- 87,558 (14% of) Alaskans cannot afford to eat balanced meals.
- 48,706 Alaskans cut the size of their meals or skip meals because there isn't enough money for food. 30,594 (63% of 48,706) of these Alaskans do this every month or some months of the year.
- 49,505 Alaskans eat less than they feel they should because there isn't enough money to buy food.
- 39,265 Alaskans are hungry and do not eat because they cannot afford enough food

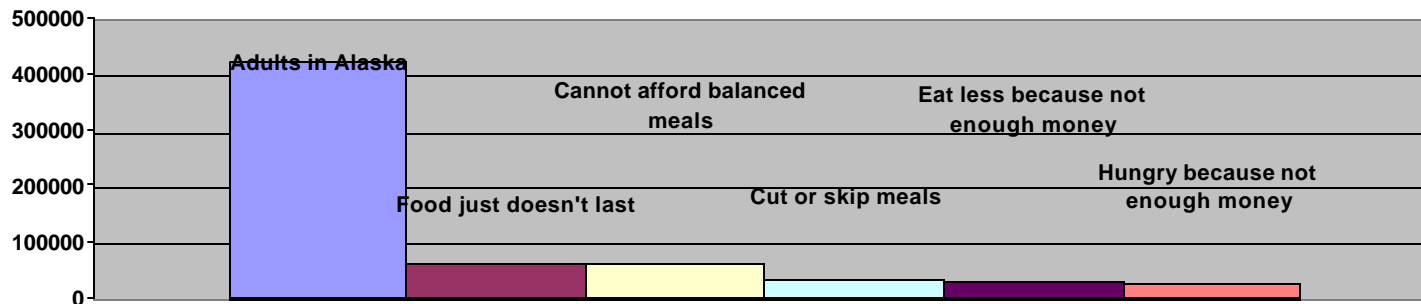


Adults

There are over 44,000 food insecure adults in Alaska. Nearly 18,000 of those people skip meals every month or some months of the year. As the breadwinners in their families, many Alaskan adults find that the money they earn just does not go far enough – almost 60,000 people find that the food they buy doesn't last and that they do not have any more to buy more.

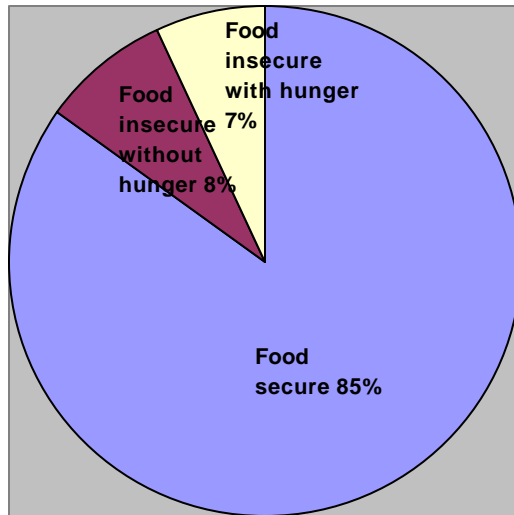


- 44,863 (11% of) Alaskan adults are food insecure. 16,376 (4% of all Alaskan adults and 37% of food insecure Alaskan adults) of them with hunger evident.
- 59,915 (13% of) Alaskan adults find that the food they buy just doesn't last and they don't have any money to get more.
- 58,863 (13% of) Alaskan adults cannot afford to eat balanced meals.
- 29,250 (7% of) Alaskan adults cut the size of their meals or skip meals because there isn't enough money for food. 17,734 (61% of 29,250) of these Alaskan adults do this every month or some months of the year.
- 28,456 Alaskan adults eat less than they feel they should because there isn't enough money to buy food.
- 23,668 Alaskan adults are hungry and do not eat because they cannot afford enough food.

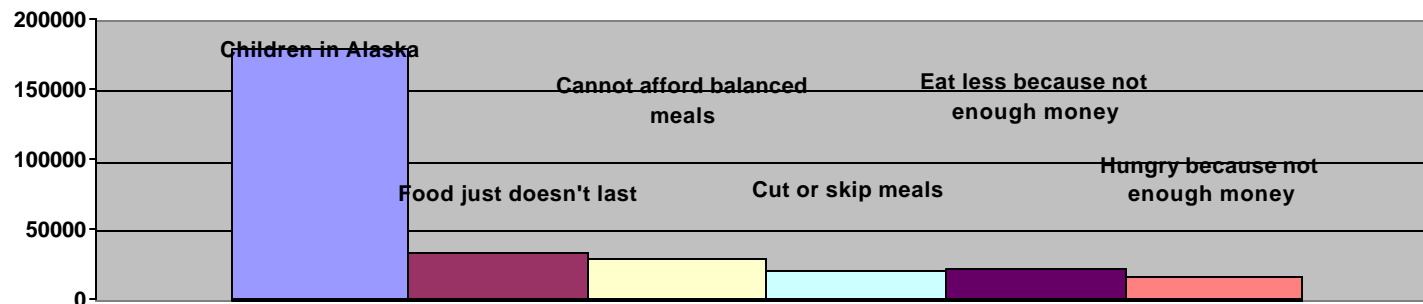


Children

Nearly 30,000 children in Alaska are worried about their next meal – over 13,000 are hungry. In every class of 30 children at an Alaskan school, two will be hungry. Two children in each class who will be unable to study well enough to give themselves the opportunity to succeed and enjoy their school experience.



- 26,933 (15% of) Alaskan children are food insecure. 13,231 (7% of all Alaskan children and 49% of food insecure Alaskan children) of them with hunger evident.
- 31,781 (17% of) Alaskan children find that the food they buy just doesn't last and they don't have any money to get more.
- 28,695 (15% of) Alaskan children cannot afford to eat balanced meals.
- 19,456 (10% of) Alaskan children cut the size of their meals or skip meals because there isn't enough money for food. 12,840 (66% of 19,456) of these Alaskan children do this every month or some months of the year.
- 21,049 Alaskan children eat less than they feel they should because there isn't enough money to buy food.
- 15,597 Alaskan children are hungry and do not eat because they cannot afford enough food.

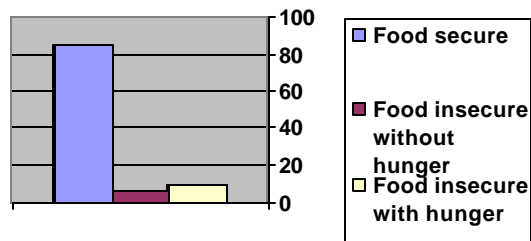


By Region

Anchorage and Rural Alaska report alarming statistics on hunger – especially child hunger. 13,918 children in Anchorage are food insecure. This amount would make the food insecure children of Anchorage one of the larger communities of Alaska. One in five Rural Alaskans are food insecure; however, this number increases to one in four children in Rural Alaska.

Anchorage and Vicinity

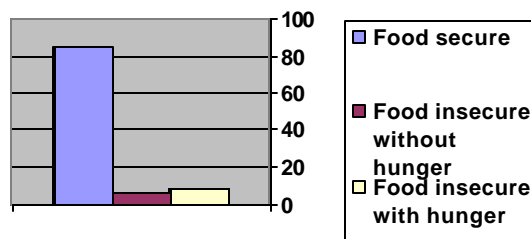
Child Hunger in Anchorage (%)



- 36,586 (11% of) people in Anchorage are food insecure. 22,668 (10% of) adults and 13,918 (15% of) children. 9,711 (4% of) adults and 8,087 (9% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 45,169 (13% of) people in Anchorage find that the food they buy just doesn't last and they don't have any money to get more. 30,690 of that total are adults and 14,479 are children.
- 45,545 (13% of) people in Anchorage cannot afford to eat balanced meals. 31,733 are adults and 13,812 are children.
- 10,667 children in Anchorage cut the size of their meals or skip meals because there isn't enough money for food. 8,176 (77% of 10,667) of these Anchorage children do this every month or some months of the year.

Gulf Coast

Child Hunger on the Gulf Coast (%)



- 8,173 (12% of) Gulf Coast Alaskans are food insecure. 5,451 (11% of) adults and 2,722 (14% of) children. 1,970 (4% of) adults and 1,581 (8% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 8,695 (13% of) Gulf Coast Alaskans find that the food they buy just doesn't last and they don't have any money to get more. 5,896 of that total are adults and 2,799 are children.
- 8,518 (12% of) Gulf Coast Alaskans cannot afford to eat balanced meals. This is often true for 4,875 (57%) of these people. 5,943 adults and 2,575 children cannot afford to eat balanced meals.

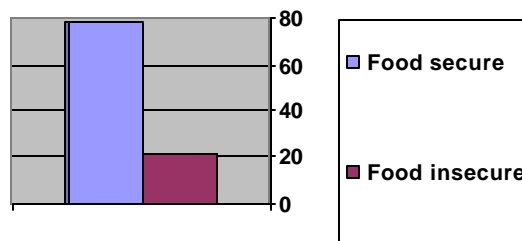
- 6,558 Gulf Coast Alaskans cut the size of their meals or skip meals because there isn't enough money for food. Of this number 4,350 are adults (8% of all Gulf Coast Alaskan adults) and 2,208 are children (11% of all Gulf Coast Alaskan children). 3,804 (87% of 4,350) of these Gulf Coast Alaskan Adults and 1,646 of these Gulf Coast Alaskan children (75% of 2,208) do this every month or some months of the year.
- 3,135 Gulf Coast Alaskans eat less than they feel they should because there isn't enough money to buy food. This is true for 1,016 (12%) of all Gulf Coast Alaskan children.
- 3,170 (6% of) Gulf Coast Alaskan adults are hungry and do not eat because they cannot afford enough food.

Southeast

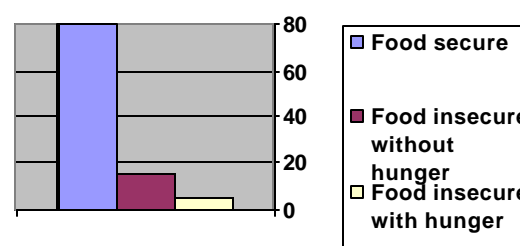
- 4,940 (8% of) Southeast Alaskans are food insecure. 3,437 (7% of) adults and 1,503 (9% of) children. 1,502 (3% of) adults and 830 (5% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.

Rural Alaska

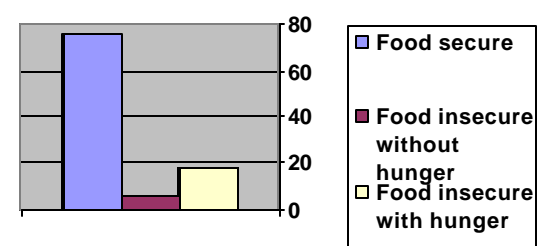
Hunger in Rural Alaska (%)



Adult Hunger in Rural Alaska (%)

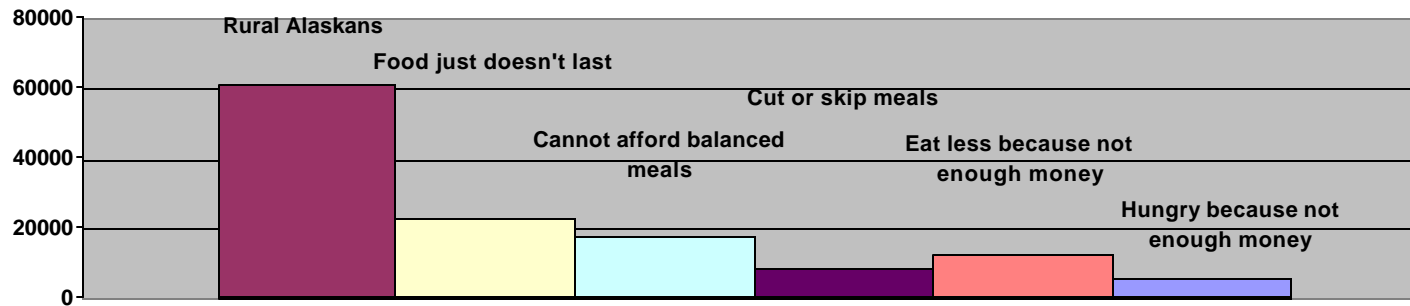


Child Hunger in Rural Alaska (%)



- 13,000 (21% of) Rural Alaskans are food insecure. 7,583 (20% of) adults and 5,417 (24% of) children. 1,744 (5% of) adults and 1,541 (18% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 22,271 (34% of) Rural Alaskans find that the food they buy just doesn't last and they don't have any money to get more. 12,949 of that total are adults and 9,322 are children.

- 16,746 (26% of) Rural Alaskans cannot afford to eat balanced meals. 10,113 adults and 6,633 children cannot afford to eat balanced meals.
- 8,040 Rural Alaskans cut the size of their meals or skip meals because there isn't enough money for food. Of this number 4,514 are adults (11% of all Rural Alaskan adults) and 3,526 are children (14% of all Rural Alaskan children). 1,682 of these are Rural Alaskan children (48% of 3,526) do this every month of the year.
- 11,668 Rural Alaskans eat less than they feel they should because there isn't enough money to buy food. This is true for 6,714 (16%) of all Rural Alaskan adults and 4,954 (20%) of Rural Alaskan children.
- 4,922 Rural Alaskans are hungry and do not eat because they cannot afford enough food. This is true for 2,719 (11%) of all Rural Alaskan adults and 2,203 (17%) of all Rural Alaskan children.



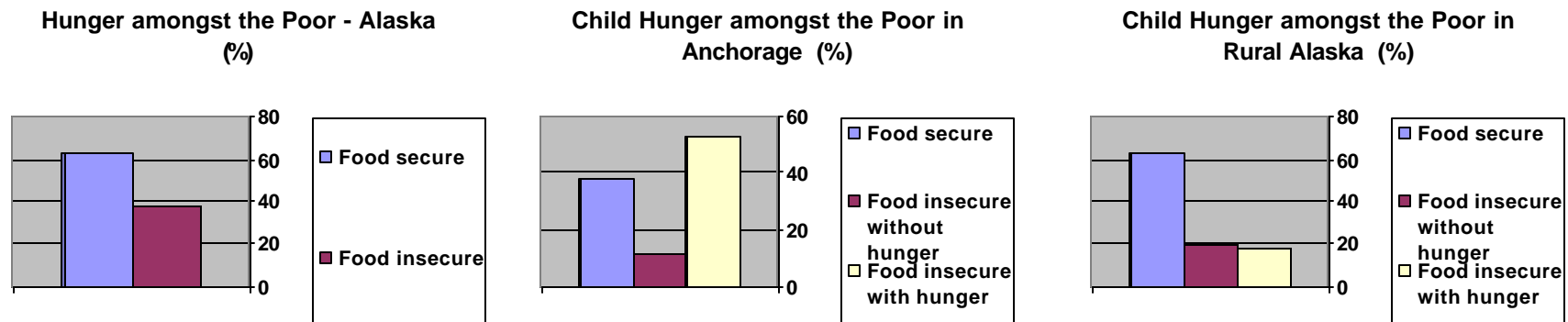
Fairbanks and Vicinity

- 13,000 (10% of) people in Fairbanks are food insecure. 5,100 (9% of) adults and 3,374 (14% of) children. 1,449 (3% of) adults and 808 (3% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 8,474 (10% of) adults in Fairbanks cannot afford to eat balanced meals.

By Income Level

Over a third of poor people in Alaska are food insecure. What is disturbing about this number is that in some regions (especially Anchorage) food insecurity amongst the poor generally means food insecure with hunger. Even more disturbing is the fact that children are most susceptible to this trend. The figure for Anchorage in this respect is troubling as 53% of the 62% of food insecure children are food insecure with hunger.

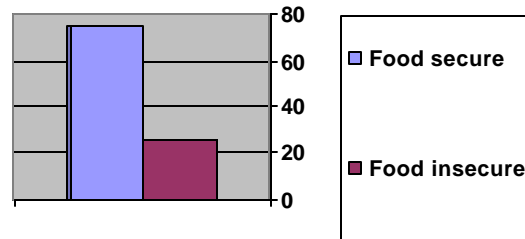
Poor (below federal poverty threshold)



- 18,514 (37% of) Alaskans who live below the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 10,024 (33% of) adults and 8,490 (34% of) children. 5,521 (33% of) adults and 5,909 (31% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 9,078 (43% of) people in Anchorage who live below the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 4,702 (34% of) adults and 4,376 (62% of) children. 3,036 (22% of) adults and 3,732 (53% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 989 (27% of) Gulf Coast Alaskans who live below the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 677 (24% of) adults and 312 (28% of) children. 433 (15% of) adults and 219 (27% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 6,290 (36% of) Rural Alaskans who live below the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 3,188 (36% of) adults and 3,102 (37% of) children. 1,247 (14% of) adults and 1,541 (37% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 1,824 (48% of) people in Fairbanks who live below the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 1,262 (53% of) adults and 562 (39% of) children. 610 (26% of) adults and 280 (20% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.

Near poor (100-199% poverty threshold)

Hunger amongst the Near Poor -
Alaska (%)



- 24,597 (25% of) Alaskans who live just above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 14,328 (22% of) adults and 10,251 (30% of) children. 5,470 (8% of) adults and 5,483 (16% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 11,036 (22% of) people in Anchorage who live just above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 6,186 (19% of) adults and 4,850 (29% of) children. 2,730 (8% of) adults and 3,540 (21% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 3,657 (27% of) Gulf Coast Alaskans who live just above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 2,112 (15% of) adults and 1,545 (30% of) children. 1,166 (14% of) adults and 1,045 (20% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 1,213 (29% of) Southeast Alaskan children who live just above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 1,045 (20% of) are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 4,585 (31% of) Rural Alaskans who live just above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 2,941 (30% of) adults and 1,644 (34% of) children. 106 (1% of) adults and 56 (1% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 3,328 (48% of) people in Fairbanks who live just above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 1,598 (19% of) adults and 1,730 (32% of) children. 723 (9% of) adults and 528 (10% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.

Middle/high (200%+ poverty threshold)

- 28,078 (5% of) Alaskans who live on incomes 200% and above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 19,886 (6% of) adults and 8,192 (7% of) children. 5,385 (2% of) adults and 1,838 (2% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 2,662 (7% of) Gulf Coast Alaskans who live on incomes 200% and above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 371 (1% of) adults are food insecure with hunger evident.
- 2,123 (7% of) Rural Alaskans who live on incomes 200% and above the federal poverty threshold are food insecure. 1,453 (8% of) adults and 670 (7% of) children. 391 (2% of) adults and 328 (4% of) children are food insecure with hunger evident.

Food Insecurity in Alaska at a Glance

Food Insecure with Hunger (Adults and Children²) – Absolute Numbers

	Adults	Children	Total
Alaska	16,376	13,231	29,607
Anchorage	9,711	8,087	17,798
Gulf Coast	1,970	1,581	3,551
Southeast	1,502	830	2,332
Rural Alaska	1,744	1,926	3,670
Fairbanks	1,449	808	2,257

Food Insecure with Hunger (Adults and Children) – Percentages

	Adults	Children	Total
Alaska	4	7	4
Anchorage	4	9	5
Gulf Coast	4	8	5
Southeast	3	5	4
Rural Alaska	5	7	6
Fairbanks	3	3	3

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Adults and Children) – Absolute Numbers

	Adults	Children	Total
Alaska	44,238	26,933	71,171
Anchorage	22,668	13,918	36,586
Gulf Coast	5,451	2,722	8,173
Southeast	3,437	1,503	4,940
Rural Alaska	7,583	5,417	13,000
Fairbanks	5,100	3,374	8,474

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Adults and Children) – Percentages

	Adults	Children	Total
Alaska	11	15	12
Anchorage	10	15	11
Gulf Coast	11	14	12
Southeast	7	9	8
Rural Alaska	20	24	21
Fairbanks	9	14	10

² Includes all income levels

Food Insecure with Hunger (Income Level³) – Absolute Numbers

	Poor	Near Poor	Total
Alaska	11,430	10,953	22,383
Anchorage	6,768	6,270	13,038
Gulf Coast	652	2,211	2,863
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	2,788	162	2,950
Fairbanks	890	1,251	2,140

Food Insecure with Hunger (Income Level) – Percentages

	Poor	Near Poor	Total
Alaska	23	11	15
Anchorage	32	12	18
Gulf Coast	18	16	17
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	16	1	9
Fairbanks	23	17	20

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Income Level) – Absolute Numbers

	Poor	Near Poor	Total
Alaska	18,514	24,597	43,111
Anchorage	9,078	11,036	20,114
Gulf Coast	989	3,657	4,646
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	6,290	4,585	10,875
Fairbanks	1,824	3,328	5,152

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Income Level) – Percentages

	Poor	Near Poor	Total
Alaska	37	25	29
Anchorage	43	22	28
Gulf Coast	27	27	27
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	36	31	34
Fairbanks	48	48	48

³ Does not include middle incomes

Food Insecure with Hunger (Comparison⁴) – Absolute Numbers

	Poor		Near Poor	
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
Alaska	5,521	5,909	5,470	5,483
Anchorage	3,036	3,732	2,730	3,540
Gulf Coast	433	219	1,166	1,045
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	1,247	1,541	106	56
Fairbanks	610	280	723	528

Food Insecure with Hunger (Comparison) – Percentages

	Poor		Near Poor	
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
Alaska	18	31	8	16
Anchorage	22	53	8	21
Gulf Coast	15	27	11	10
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	14	18	1	1
Fairbanks	26	20	9	10

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Comparison) – Absolute Numbers

	Poor		Near Poor	
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
Alaska	10,024	8,490	14,328	10,251
Anchorage	4,702	4,376	6,186	4,850
Gulf Coast	677	312	2,112	1,545
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	3,188	3,102	2,941	1,644
Fairbanks	2,941	1,644	1,598	1,730

Food Insecure with and without Hunger (Comparison) – Percentages

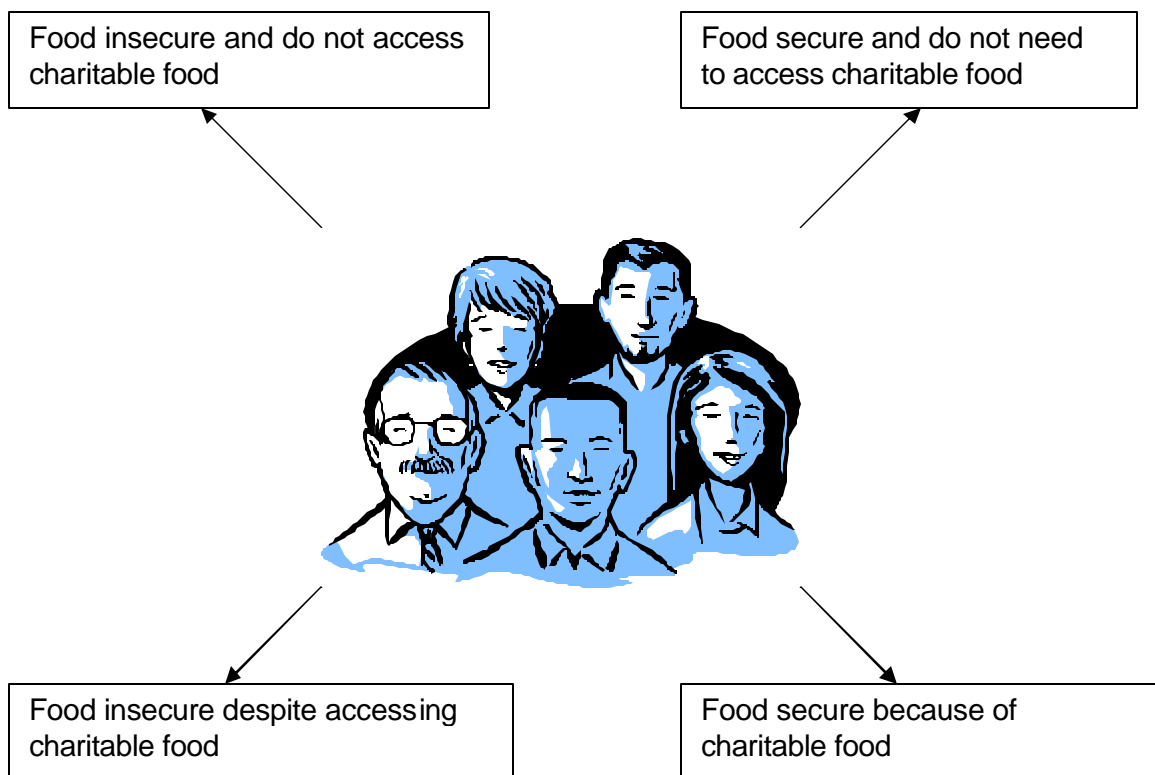
	Poor		Near Poor	
	Adults	Children	Adults	Children
Alaska	33	34	22	30
Anchorage	34	62	19	29
Gulf Coast	24	28	15	30
Southeast	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rural Alaska	36	37	30	34
Fairbanks	53	39	19	32

⁴ Does not include middle incomes

Conclusion

The Results in Context

According to the BRFSS survey 71,171 children and adults in Alaska are food insecure, which is 12% of the statewide population. This number is consistent with the 12.2% of Alaskans detailed in the USDA Household Food Security in the United States, 2005 report⁵ as food insecure. The BRFSS results also complement the findings of the Hunger in America 2006 – Alaska Report, which found that 83,000 Alaskans are accessing the charitable food distribution system (approximately 1 in 8 of the statewide population). The Hunger in America 2006 report focused only on the portion of the Alaskan population utilizing the services of food pantries and soup kitchens, while the BRFSS results focus on the population of Alaska as a whole – food secure and food insecure. Unfortunately, the BRFSS survey does not include a question on whether surveyed individuals are accessing charitable food. This means the BRFSS survey does not tell us how many food secure or food insecure people statewide are utilizing the charitable food network. The following illustrates the categories of people not captured by the BRFSS survey:



Future use of the BRFSS survey would need to include a question on whether people are accessing charitable food in order to understand the impact that charitable food has on food insecurity in Alaska.

⁵ The report is available at: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR29/>

Acting on Results

The BRFSS results highlight the elevated levels of food insecurity in three Alaskan populations: children, people with low-incomes, and rural Alaskans. This outcome is reflected in the legislative agendas of Food Bank of Alaska and The Alaska Food Coalition, which includes the following policy actions:

- Increase support statewide for federal school nutrition programs
- Raise public and legislator awareness that hunger is an income issue
- Lobby for a change to the federal tax code which would allow food donations made to Alaska Native tribes to be eligible for tax deductions

In the coming year both Food Bank of Alaska and The Alaska Food Coalition will join its advocacy networks to push state and federal legislators on these issues.

In addition, support in the form of capital improvements to facilities and equipment is required for charitable food agencies while they try to meet increasing emergency food assistance needs in their communities. The Alaska Food Coalition has identified 120 such needs across the state and gaps in service in five rural areas⁶. This physical capacity shortfall is happening despite the fact that agencies all across the state face challenges such as finding adequate funding. The documented increase in demand coupled with the strain on the physical capacity of anti-hunger agencies, prompted The Alaska Food Coalition to initiate a project which seeks to fund the restoration and expansion of physical capacity in the charitable food distribution network. The completion of groundwork necessary for making such a large funding request and the request itself is anticipated for FY 2008.

The necessity to expand the overstretched charitable food distribution network, in addition to advocating for increased state assistance for hungry people is recommended by this report to offset the alarming trends highlighted by the 2006 BRFSS survey.

⁶ The areas are Aleutians East, Bethel, Southeast Fairbanks, Wade Hampton, and Yukon-Koyukuk census districts. Please see 'Capacity-building – 2007 Results' available at: <http://www.alaskafood.org/research.shtml>

Appendix 1: What is the BRFSS Survey?

The following explanation comes from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services:

“The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is conducted by the Alaska Division of Public Health in cooperation with the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is a monthly telephone survey that utilizes a standard protocol and interviewing methods developed by the CDC.

Although the main purpose of the BRFSS is to estimate the prevalence of behavioral risk factors in the general population, interviewing each person is not economically feasible. Thus, a probability (or random) sample is selected in which all persons have a known chance of selection. The BRFSS in Alaska uses a stratified random sampling design. The Alaska sample is stratified into five regions based on common demographics. An equal number of interviews are conducted from each region, which purposely over-samples the non-urban areas of Alaska.

Each month over 200 Alaska residents age 18 and older are interviewed over the telephone regarding their health practices and day to day living habits, to reach an annual sample size of 2,500 (500 per region). The data are collected from January through December, for each year.⁷”

The main survey instrument includes questions on health behaviors from tobacco use to health care access. Additional questions can be added to the survey by outside agencies to collect data on specific topics. For 2006 six questions on hunger (the short form of the U.S. Food Security Core Module Questionnaire) were incorporated. They were:

“These next questions are about the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months and whether you were able to afford the food you need.

1. I'm going to read you two statements that people have made about their food situation. Please tell me whether the statement was OFTEN, SOMETIMES, or NEVER true for (you/you or the other members of your household) in the last 12 months.

The first statement is, "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- a. Often true
- b. Sometimes true
- c. Never true
- d. (Don't know, Refused)

⁷ <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/hsl/brfss/method.htm>

2. "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?
 - a. Often true
 - b. Sometimes true
 - c. Never true
 - d. (Don't know, Refused)

3. In the last 12 months, since (date 12 months ago) did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No (go to 5)
 - c. (Don't know, Refused) (go to 5)

4. **[Ask only if # 3 = YES]** How often did this happen – almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
 - a. Almost every month
 - b. Some months but not every month
 - c. Only 1 or 2 months
 - d. (Don't know, Refused)
 - e. (X) Question not asked because of negative or missing response to question 3

5. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. (Don't know, Refused)

6. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. (Don't know, Refused)"

Resources:

Alaska BRFSS website

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/hsl/brfss/>

National BRFSS website

<http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.htm>

Appendix 2 – Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)

2006 Alaska BRFSS Survey: Food Security – Data Tables of Notable Statistics

12-month Food Security Scale – Questionnaire

Question 1: "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more."

Adults – based on estimates	Children – based on estimates	Totals – based on estimates
15,196 – Total – often true (3.4%) 44,719 – Total – sometimes true (10%) = 59,915 out of 447,520 (13.4%)	7,716 – Total – often true (4.1%) 24,065 – Total – sometimes true (12.8%) = 31,781 out of 187,828 (16.9%)	22,912 – Total – often true 68,784 – Total – sometimes true = 91,696 out of 635,348
8,543 – Anchorage – often true (3.5%) 22,147 – Anchorage – sometimes true (9.1%) = 30,690 out of 243,585 (12.6%)	3,228 – Anchorage – often true (3.2%) 11,251 – Anchorage – sometimes true (11.3%) = 14,479 out of 99,955 (13.5%)	11,771 – Anchorage – often true 33,398 – Anchorage – sometimes true = 45,169 out of 343,540
1,645 – Gulf Coast – often true (3.2%) 4,251 – Gulf Coast – sometimes true (8.2%) = 5,896 out of 51,847 (11.4%)	967 – Gulf Coast – often true (4.9%) 1,832 – Gulf Coast – sometimes true (9.2%) = 2,799 out of 19,903 (14.1%)	2,612 – Gulf Coast – often true 6,083 – Gulf Coast – sometimes true = 8,695 out of 71,750
2,882 – Rural Alaska – often true (7%) 10,067 – Rural Alaska – sometimes true (24.5%) = 12,949 out of 41,107 (31.5%)	2,529 – Rural Alaska – often true (10.5%) 6,793 – Rural Alaska – sometimes true (28.3%) = 9,322 out of 24,039 (38.8%)	5,411 – Rural Alaska – often true 16,860 – Rural Alaska – sometimes true = 22,271 out of 65,146

Question 2: "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals."

Adults – based on estimates	Children – based on estimates	Totals – based on estimates
15,042 – Total – often true (3.4%) 43,821 – Total – sometimes true (9.8%) = 58,863 out of 446,951 (13.2%)	7,881 – Total – often true (4.2%) 20,814 – Total – sometimes true (11.2%) = 28,695 out of 186,010 (15.4%)	22,923 – Total – often true 64,635 – Total – sometimes true = 87,558 out of 632,961
7,466 – Anchorage – often true (3.1%) 24,267 – Anchorage – sometimes true (10%) = 31,733 out of 242,747 (13.1%)	3,204 – Anchorage – often true (3.3%) 10,608 – Anchorage – sometimes true (10.8%) = 13,812 out of 98,492 (14.1%)	10,670 – Anchorage – often true 34,875 – Anchorage – sometimes true = 45,545 out of 341,239
2,980 – Gulf Coast – often true (5.8%) 2,963 – Gulf Coast – sometimes true (5.7%) = 5,943 out of 51,728 (11.5%)	1,895 – Gulf Coast – often true (9.5%) 680 – Gulf Coast – sometimes true (3.4%) = 2,575 out of 19,851 (12.9%)	4,875 – Gulf Coast – often true 3,643 – Gulf Coast – sometimes true = 8,518 out of 71,579

2,279 – Rural Alaska – often true (5.5%) 7,834 – Rural Alaska – sometimes true (18.9%) = 10,113 out of 41,534 (24.4%) 1,126 – Fairbanks – often true (2%) 5,005 – Fairbanks – sometimes true (8.2%) = 6,131 out of 61,140 (10.2%)	2,060 – Rural Alaska – often true (8.7%) 4,573 – Rural Alaska – sometimes true (19.3%) = 6,633 out of 23,734 (28%)	4,339 – Rural Alaska – often true 12,407 – Rural Alaska – sometimes true = 16,746 out of 65,268
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Question 3: In the last 12 months, since (date 12 months ago) did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
29,250 – Total – yes (6.5%)	19,456 – Total – yes (10.3%)	48,706 – Total – yes
4,350 – Gulf Coast – yes (8.3%)	10,667 – Anchorage – yes (10.7%)	6,558 – Gulf Coast – yes
4,514 – Rural Alaska – yes (10.9%)	2,208 – Gulf Coast – yes (11.1%)	8,040 – Rural Alaska – yes
	3,526 – Rural Alaska – yes (14.4%)	

Question 4: [Ask only if # 3 = YES] How often did this happen – almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
8,967 – Total – almost every month (30.8%)	6,830 – Total – almost every month (35.1%)	15,797 – Total – almost every month
8,767 – Total – some months but not every month (30.1%)	6,010 – Total – some months but not every month (30.9%)	14,777 – Total – some months but not every month
11,358 – Total – only 1 or 2 months = 29,092	6,616 – Total – only 1 or 2 months (34%) = 19,456	17,974 – Total – only 1 or 2 months = 48,548
4,204 – Anchorage – almost every month (30.4%)	4,024 – Anchorage – almost every month (37.7%)	8,048 – Anchorage – almost every month
4,185 – Anchorage – some months but not every month (30.3%)	4,152 – Anchorage – some months but not every month (29.5%)	8,337 – Anchorage – some months but not every month
5,427 – Anchorage – only 1 or 2 months = 13,186	3,493 – Anchorage – only 1 or 2 months (32.7%) = 10,669	8,920 – Anchorage – only 1 or 2 months = 25,305

1,819 – Gulf Coast – almost every month (41.8%) 1,985 – Gulf Coast – some months but not every month (45.6%) 545 – Gulf Coast – only 1 or 2 months = 4,350	483 – Gulf Coast – almost every month (21.9%) 1,163 – Gulf Coast – some months but not every month (52.7%) 562 – Gulf Coast – only 1 or 2 months (25.4%) = 2,208 1,682 – Rural Alaska – almost every month (47.7%) 394 – Rural Alaska – some months but not every month (11.2%) 1,450 – Rural Alaska – only 1 or 2 months (41.1%) = 3,526	2,302 – Gulf Coast – almost every month 3,148 – Gulf Coast – some months but not every month 1,107 – Gulf Coast – only 1 or 2 months = 6,557
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Question 5: In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
28,456 – Total – yes (6.3%) 2,119 – Gulf Coast – yes (7.3%) 6,714 – Rural Alaska – yes (16.1%)	21,049 – Total – yes (11.1%) 1,016 – Gulf Coast – yes (11.7%) 4,954 – Rural Alaska – yes (20.3%)	49,505 – Total – yes 3,135 – Gulf Coast – yes 11,668 – Rural Alaska – yes

Question 6: In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
23,668 – Total – yes (5.3%) 3,170 – Gulf Coast – yes (6.1%) 2,719 – Rural Alaska – yes (10.6%)	15,597 – Total – yes (8.3%) 2,203 – Rural Alaska – yes (16.8%)	39,265 – Total – yes 4,922 – Rural Alaska – yes

5 BRFSS Regions – Food Security Scale

Complex Samples

Adults – based on estimates	Children – based on estimates	Totals – based on estimates
27,863 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (6.6%) 16,376 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (3.9%) = 44,239 out of 421,664 (10.5%)	13,702 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (7.7%) 13,231 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (7.4%) = 26,933 out of 178,179 (15.1%) 5,831 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident (6.1%) 8,087 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident (8.5%) = 13,918 out of 95,055 (14.6%) 3,491 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (15.6%) 1,926 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (8.6%) = 5,417 out of 22,319 (24.2%)	41,565 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 29,607 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 71,172 out of 599,843

Subpopulations - Poor (below federal poverty threshold)

Adults – based on estimates	Children – based on estimates	Totals – based on estimates
4,503 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (14.8%) 5,520 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (18.2%) = 10,028 out of 30,349 (33%) 1,666 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident (12%) 3,036 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident (21.9%) = 4,702 out of 13,872 (33.9%)	2,581 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (13.5%) 5,909 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (30.8%) = 8,490 out of 19,162 (31.3%) 644 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident (9.1%) 3,732 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident (57.7%) = 4,702 out of 7,082 (66.8%) 93 – Gulf Coast – food insecure with no hunger evident (11.4%) 219 – Gulf Coast – food insecure with hunger evident (26.7%) = 312 out of 820 (38.1%)	7,084 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 11,429 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 18,513 out of 49,511 2,310 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident 6,768 – Anchorage and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident = 9,078 out of 20,954

<p>1,941 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (22%) 1,247 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (14.1%) = 3,188 out of 8,842 (36.1%)</p> <p>652 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident (27.4%) 610 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident (25.6%) = 1,262 out of 2,381 (53%)</p>	<p>1,561 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (18.6%) 1,541 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (18.4%) = 3,102 out of 8,391 (37%)</p> <p>282 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident (19.8%) 280 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident (19.6%) = 562 out of 1,426 (39.4%)</p>	<p>3,502 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident 2,788 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident = 6,290 out of 17,233</p> <p>934 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident 890 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident = 1,824 out of 3,807</p>
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Subpopulations - Near poor (100-199% poverty threshold)

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
<p>8,858 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (13.6%) 5,470 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (8.4%) = 14,328 out of 64,927 (22%)</p> <p>746 – Southeast – food insecure with no hunger evident (14.4%) 743 – Southeast – food insecure with hunger evident (14.3%) = 1,489 out of 5,186 (28.7%)</p> <p>2,835 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (28.5%) 106 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (1.1%) = 2,941 out of 9,964 (29.6%)</p>	<p>4,768 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (14%) 5,483 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (16.1%) = 10,251 out of 33,967 (30.1%)</p> <p>1,588 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (32.7%) 56 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (1.2%) = 1,644 out of 4,858 (33.9%)</p> <p>1,202 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with no hunger evident (22.4%) 528 – Fairbanks and Vicinity – food insecure with hunger evident (9.8%) = 1,730 out of 5375 (53%)</p>	<p>13,626 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 10,953 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 24,597 out of 98,894</p> <p>4,423 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident 162 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident = 4,585 out of 14,822</p>

Subpopulations - Middle/high (200%+ poverty threshold)

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
<p>14,501 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (4.4%) 5,385 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (1.6%) = 19,886 out of 326,388 (6%)</p> <p>2,291 – Gulf Coast – food insecure with no hunger evident (6.1%) 371 – Gulf Coast – food insecure with hunger evident (1%) = 2,662 out of 37,268 (7.1%)</p> <p>1,062 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (5.5%) 391 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (2%) = 1,453 out of 19,428 (7.5%)</p>	<p>6,354 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (5.1%) 1,838 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (1.5%) = 8,192 out of 125,590 (6.6%)</p> <p>342 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident (3.8%) 328 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident (3.6%) = 670 out of 9,070 (7.4%)</p>	<p>20,855 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 7,223 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 28,078 out of 451,978</p> <p>1,404 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with no hunger evident 719 – Rural Alaska – food insecure with hunger evident = 2,123 out of 28,498</p>

Household Income Level (Poverty) (Low Income Range) – Food Security Scale

Complex Samples

Adults – based on estimates	Children – based on estimates	Totals – based on estimates
27,862 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (6.6%) 16,376 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (3.9%) = 44,238 out of 421,664 (10.5%)	13,702 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (7.7%) 13,231 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (7.4%) = 26,933 out of 178,719 (15.1%)	41,564 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 29,607 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 71,171 out of 600,383
4,503 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (14.8%) 5,521 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (18.2%) = 10,024 out of 30,349 (33%)	2,581 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (13.5%) 5,909 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (30.8%) = 8,490 out of 19,162 (34.3%)	7,084 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 11,430 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 18,514 out of 49,511
8,858 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (13.6%) 5,470 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (8.4%) = 14,328 out of 64,927 (22%)	4,768 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (14%) 5,483 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (16.1%) = 10,251 out of 33,967 (30.1%)	13,626 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 10,953 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 24,597 out of 98,894

Subpopulations – Anchorage and Vicinity

Adults – based on estimates	Children – based on estimates	Totals – based on estimates
12,957 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (5.7%) 9,711 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (4.2%) = 22,668 out of 228,987 (9.9%)	5,831 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (6.1%) 8,087 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (8.5%) = 13,918 out of 95,055 (14.6%)	18,788 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 17,798 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 36,586 out of 324,042
1,666 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (12%) 3,036 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (21.9%) = 4,702 out of 13,872 (33.9%)	644 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (9.1%) 3,732 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (52.7%) = 4,376 out of 7,082 (61.8%)	2,310 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 6,768 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 9,078 out of 20,954
3,456 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (10.5%) 2,730 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (8.3%) = 6,186 out of 32,838 (18.8%)	1,310 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (7.8%) 3,540 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (21.1%) = 4,850 out of 16,805 (28.9%)	4,766 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 6,270 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 11,036 out of 49,643

Subpopulations – Gulf Coast

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
3,481 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (7.2%) 1,970 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (4.1%) = 5,451 out of 48,620 (11.3%) 244 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (8.7%) 433 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (15.4%) = 677 out of 2,816 (24.1%) 946 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (11.1%) 1,166 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (13.7%) = 2,112 out of 8,536 (14.8%)	1,141 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (5.9%) 1,581 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (8.1%) = 2,722 out of 19,437 (14%) 93 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (11.4%) 219 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (26.7%) = 312 out of 820 (28.1%) 500 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (9.7%) 1,045 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (20.3%) = 1,545 out of 5,152 (30%)	4,622 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 3,551 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 8,173 out of 68,057 337 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 652 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 989 out of 3,636 1,446 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 2,211 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 3,657 out of 13,688

Subpopulations – Southeast

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
1,935 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (4.1%) 1,502 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (3.2%) = 3,437 out of 47,333 (7.3%)	673 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (4%) 830 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (4.9%) = 1,503 out of 17,015 (8.9%) 168 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (9.4%) 1,045 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (20.3%) = 1,213 out of 5,152 (29.7%)	2,608 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 2,332 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 4,940 out of 64,348

Subpopulations – Rural Alaska

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
5,839 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (15.3%) 1,744 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (4.6%) = 7,583 out of 38,234 (19.9%)	3,491 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (15.6%) 1,926 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (8.6%) = 5,417 out of 22,319 (24.2%)	9,330 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 3,670 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 13,000 out of 60,553
1,941 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (22%) 1,247 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (14.1%) = 3,188 out of 8,842 (36.1%)	1,561 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (18.6%) 1,541 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (18.4%) = 3,102 out of 8,391 (37%)	3,502 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 2,788 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 6,290 out of 17,233
2,835 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (28.5%) 106 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (1.1%) = 2,941 out of 9,964 (29.6%)	1,588 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (32.7%) 56 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (1.2%) = 1,644 out of 4,858 (33.9%)	4,423 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 162 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 4,585 out of 14,822

Subpopulations – Fairbanks and Vicinity

<i>Adults – based on estimates</i>	<i>Children – based on estimates</i>	<i>Totals – based on estimates</i>
3,651 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (6.2%) 1,449 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (2.5%) = 5,100 out of 58,490 (8.7%)	2,566 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident (10.3%) 808 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident (3.2%) = 3,374 out of 24,892 (13.5%)	6,217 – Total – food insecure with no hunger evident 2,257 – Total – food insecure with hunger evident = 8,474 out of 83,382
652 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (27.4%) 610 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (25.6%) = 1,262 out of 2,381 (53%)	282 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (19.8%) 280 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (19.6%) = 562 out of 1,426 (39.4%)	934 – Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 890 – Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 1,824 out of 3,807
875 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (10.4%) 723 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (8.6%) = 1,598 out of 8,404 (19%)	1,202 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident (22.4%) 528 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident (9.8%) = 1,730 out of 5,375 (32.2%)	2,077 – Near Poor – food insecure with no hunger evident 1,251 – Near Poor – food insecure with hunger evident = 3,328 out of 6,973